

*Memorandum*

DATE JAN 17 1977

In reply  
refer to: HRW-10

SUBJECT: Blank Signs

FROM: Chief, Real Property Acquisition Division  
Washington, D.C.TO: Regional Federal Highway Administrators  
Regions 1 - 10

This is to clarify the definition of what constitutes a blank sign under Federal regulations.

Subpart G, Part 750.707, Title 23, CFR, and FHPM 7-6-2, paragraph 8d(6)(b), provide that where an existing nonconforming sign ceases to display advertising matter, a reasonable period of time to replace advertising content must be established by each State.

When a sign remains blank for the established period, it loses its nonconforming status or rights and must be treated as an abandoned or discontinued sign. Blank is defined as void of advertising matter. An "available for lease" or similar message that concerns the availability of the sign itself does not constitute advertising matter. A sign with such a message is treated as abandoned or discontinued after expiration of the time period established by the State. When a sign displays such a message, the sign owner is in fact acknowledging that the sign facing is without live copy.

Similarly, a sign whose message has been partially obliterated by the owner so as not to identify a particular product, service or facility is treated as a blank sign.

**Sgt. G. B. Saunders**

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